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ABSTRACT

Section I of this paper notes that, because the mandate of this paper is to explore the potential contributions of older adults to adolescent development, its particular focus will be on elder service initiatives and on the practices and policies required to stimulate intergenerational cooperation. The argument is offered that engaging elders to work directly with adolescents, particularly young people growing up in poverty, constitutes one of the most compelling ideas on the social policy landscape. Despite the compelling calls to action, one finding of this paper is that a considerable gap still exists between the promise of elder service to youth and what is found in practice. Section II examines the rationale for intergenerational programing in general and for engaging older adults to serve adolescents. Section III surveys the landscape of elder service efforts along with other intergenerational programs, policies, and support activities in this area. Section IV analyzes the translation of this rationale into reality, examining the elder service gap existing between promise and practice. Section V looks at program and policy measures that might close that gap, simultaneously advancing elder service, adolescent development, and intergenerational cooperation. Section VI offers a set of concluding comments on this enterprise and its meaning. The paper concludes that, while this gap will not be bridged easily and will require genuine institutional change, closing it is an objective worth pursuing. (NB)

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THE QUIET REVOLUTION:

ELDER SERVICE AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT IN AN AGING SOCIETY

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To whatever abyss ultimate concerns may lead individual men, man as a psychosocial creature will face, toward the end of his life, a new edition of an identity crisis which we may state in the words, "I am what survives of me."

Erik Erikson, 1968

The problem is not so much that Americans are selfish, but rather that the cultural resources we have limit our own better impulses.

Robert Bellah, 1991

Older adults want to help. What they need are sturdy mechanisms that will enable them to do so.

Arthur Flemming, 1991

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I. INTRODUCTION

In 1985, Americans began hearing about a new generational conflict. A series of articles raised the spectre of "Greedy Geezers" engaged in "Taking America to the Cleaners"--depriving America's children and youth--of their fair share in a policy process dominated by elder interests.[1]

A principal contention among those leveling charges of generational inequity is that too many societal resources are being directed to the elderly because, unlike children, they vote. Proponents of this position point out that, of the roughly $500 billion in American social welfare expenditures, $388 billion is allocated for Social Security and Medicare alone.[2]

This argument then goes further, to charge that the elderly as a group don't much care about our children, their education, or the future. A recent New York Times article, illustrating this perspective, quotes a school superintendent in suburban Phoenix who complains that the elderly "can generate 3,000 to 5,000 votes for any [education] issue that comes up, and these votes come in at least 90 percent no." The article also quotes a superintendent in New Jersey who said flatly: "The elderly consistently defeat the budget."[3]

Although the generational inequity argument has generated dramatic headlines, and produced a few organizations like the Association of Boomers and Americans for Generational Equity (AGE), this attack has neither stood up to close scrutiny nor served to move policy debate in constructive directions. Indeed, it has functioned mostly to distract attention away from other, more telling sources of inequality in our society.

The image of a wealthy and selfish cohort of elders obscures the reality of a diverse aging population, a fifth of which is living on annual incomes under $10,000 a year, and whose voting patterns are far more conditioned on issues of class, party affiliation and geographic location than on age. As Harvard political scientist Hugh Heclo points out: "The elderly don't vote as a bloc any more than any other group."[4]

The inequity argument blinds us further to the far more fundamental imbalance in our society between rich and poor of all ages. The main reason that so many children are doing poorly these days, argues Andrew Cherlin of Johns Hopkins, is growing income inequality: "The rich are getting richer and the poor poorer. And the poor tend to have more children than the rich. That's certainly one big reason why children are doing worse."[5] The inequity argument similarly hides a growing pattern of retreat by the "haves" from this country's urban centers, a pattern that is prevalent across the age spectrum and that disproportionately injures young people in poverty.

Finally, the generational inequity position assumes that social service spending cannot be increased--an assumption that accepts its overall underfunding, and implies that the only way to reduce the poverty of children is to increase it among the elderly. Boston College sociologists Eric Kingson and John Williamson ask: "would it achieve social justice if the equalization merely increased old-age poverty to the level of children today?" Kingson and Williamson go on to wonder whether the attack on elder entitlements doesn't just contribute--wittingly or unwittingly--to a broader assault on social welfare spending for persons of all ages.[6]

In sharp contrast to the contentions of the generational inequity camp, survey results have revealed far more evidence of generational interdependence than of intergenerational conflict. A survey by Daniel Yankelovich found that "Most Americans are convinced that a blend of the energy of youth and the experience of older people is required to solve the country's problems." The Yankelovich survey disclosed that two in three Americans feel strongly that the older generation can continue to make an important contribution and that there are no signs of waning support for programs targeting the elderly; these findings were "as true for young adults (21-29) as for any other age group."[7]

This vision of our society challenges a conflict-oriented model of generational relations with one based on mutual interest and concern; it generates the basic insight that elders and youth, despite outward appearances, confront many similar circumstances. Although these groups exist on opposite ends of the lifespan, Gray Panther founder Maggie Kuhn points out that both age groups are marginalized in our society, seen as dependent, not taken seriously. Both have limited incomes; often find themselves in conflict with the middle generation; and encounter labor-market related transitions, difficulties and discrimination. Furthermore, adolescents and elders each experience significant physiological changes, and both are often involved with narcotics, although "faced with different drugs and different pushers." Kuhn adds that both groups--as a function of their marginal position in society--are in a particularly good spot to contribute to constructive social change.[8]

Kuhn's *apercus* about the parallels of being old and young in contemporary America are themselves paralleled by a wide set of shared policy concerns for these generations. Marion Wright Edelman of the Children's Defense Fund declares:

> Children and older Americans...share the interest of assuring the strength and quality and adequate funding of government programs that benefit both groups....The examples are legion. Both groups make extensive use of the Dependent Care Tax Credit; the Medicaid Program;

the Title XX Social Services Block Grant; the SSI program to name a few.

Edelman goes on to point out that even programs we are accustomed to thinking of as benefitting one group, such as Social Security, in fact help more than three million children and youth whose parents are retired, disabled, or deceased.[9]

The common stake identified by Kuhn and Edelman forms the backdrop for this paper about a tangible example of the interdependence of the generations: the opportunity that comes from bringing elders and youth together, face to face, in intergenerational service programs designed for mutual benefit.

Because the mandate of this paper is to explore the potential contributions of older adults to adolescent development, its particular focus will be on elder service initiatives and on the practices and policies required to stimulate intergenerational cooperation.

The argument that will be offered is that engaging elders to work directly with adolescents, particularly young people growing up in poverty, constitutes one of the most compelling ideas on the social policy landscape.

Indeed, in pursuing this point of view, this paper accords with recent conclusions by a number of prominent policy makers and analysts, including Senator Sam Nunn, who has expressed strong interest in a "senior corps." Appeals for a "senior volunteer corps" have also emerged from various elderly advocates, as have visions of an "Elder Corps" based on a domestic model of the Peace Corps. The author Sylvia Ann Hewlett issues a similar call to action in her recent volume, When the Bough Breaks, which suggests that "tapping the energy and compassion of seniors might go some distance toward filling the enormous parenting deficit in our society."[10]

One of the most convincing and carefully reasoned perspectives on expanding elder service opportunities comes from Richard Danzig and Peter Szanton, whose thorough investigation of the national service question resulted in the book, National Service: What Would It Mean? After reviewing a variety of service scenarios in terms of their costs and benefits, Danzig and Szanton state that "Persons at or beyond retirement age may have more to give and more reason to benefit from national service than any other age group."[11]

Despite such compelling calls to action, a finding of this paper is that a considerable gap still exists between the promise of elder service to youth, and what we find in practice. However, it concludes that, while this gap will not be bridged easily and

requires genuine institutional change, closing it is an objective worth pursuing.

The paper's next five sections are as follows: Section II examines the rationale for intergenerational programming in general and for engaging older adults to serve adolescents; Section III surveys the landscape of elder service efforts along with other intergenerational programs, policy and support activities in this area; Section IV analyzes the translation of this rationale into reality, examining the "elder service gap" existing between promise and practice; Section V looks at program and policy measures that might close that gap, simultaneously advancing elder service, adolescent development and intergenerational cooperation; and Section VI offers a set of concluding comments on this enterprise and its meaning.

In the discussion that follows, elders are generally defined as 55 and older (although some cited surveys and projects define "older adults" as over 60 or 65), adolescents as young people between the ages of 10 and 18. Throughout, the word "elder" is used in reference both to this word's descriptive and normative meanings: according to Webster's, an older adult who is "given special functions or authority consistent with their age, experience, or dignity." As mentioned, particular attention will be devoted to adolescents living in poverty, the group of particular concern to the authors and the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, sponsors of this paper.

The methodology employed in compiling the information for this document was simple and straightforward. A brief survey of selected aging organizations, as well as an informal one of youth groups, was conducted to get a rough sense of activity levels and pertinent issues. These surveys were augmented by interviews with a variety of leading observers and policy makers in the fields of gerontology, youth development, social policy and voluntarism. A literature review of intergenerational programming also contributed to the analysis.

II. THE LOGIC OF ENGAGING ELDERS

The rationale for bringing elders and youth together in projects designed to produce mutual benefit is a powerful one. It can be argued that the circumstances of elders and youth are not only parallel but, as the late Congressman Claude Pepper has noted, quite complementary: from the perspective of demographics and human resource use; from the standpoint of developmental psychology; and from that of politics and social theory. The following sections trace the main components of this rationale.

DOUBLE SOCIAL UTILITY

Engaging elders to work with disadvantaged youth has the appeal of efficiency. As one program operator argues: "What we have are these two groups: one with so many needs and the other with so much time."[12]

There is consensus among demographers that the elder population is growing rapidly. At present, there are 28 million Americans over 65, approximately 12 percent of the population. In a generation the proportion of elders in the population is expected nearly to double, reaching 20 percent by the year 2030.[13] The backgrounds and aptitude of these elders are in many instances potentially useful to young people. Their considerable experience as workers, professionals and parents, position them well to assist young people in gaining experience and know-how in a variety of key areas, including vocational skills, literacy and childrearing.

At the same time, the health of seniors continues to improve, and retirement frees up a substantial amount of time--on the average of 25 hours a week for men, 18 for women[14]--to be devoted to new pursuits. These trends have led one proponent of senior voluntarism to conclude that "Older adults are the only *increasing* natural resource in this country."[15]

Indeed, recent studies have shown that many elders are looking for part-time opportunities for paid or volunteer engagement. A 1982 Louis Harris poll found that 5.9 million elders, a quarter of the population over 65, were engaged in volunteer activities and that an additional 2.1 million would like to be.[16] A more recent survey, sponsored by the U. S. Administration on Aging and conducted by Marriott Senior Living Services in 1991, found that 41 percent of the senior respondents were involved in voluntarism, including 46 percent of those surveyed between the ages of 65 and 69, and 45 percent of those 70-74.

The Marriott survey goes on to suggest that there are opportunities to further senior voluntarism. According to this investigation, an additional 14 million older Americans (37.4%) "are

potential volunteers who are or may be willing to volunteer if asked." Furthermore, current volunteers, 25.6 percent (4 million) indicated they would have preferred to volunteer more time, and 40 percent of seniors asked "said they feel the federal, state and local governments are doing less than they should to promote and provide opportunities for volunteerism." When asked for preferences regarding the type of volunteer work, helping children was the leading response (35%), followed by work with other older adults (32%) and with people with disabilities (29%).[17]

Simultaneous with the increase in the elder population is the desperate need for human resources in the education and human services fields. There is a crisis in teaching: a quarter of the current teachers need to be replaced by the year 2000, [18]and there are comparable staffing shortages at other levels in our urban public schools. In most major cities, student-counselor ratios are over 500 to 1, with social work, psychological and aide positions stretched thin and facing deeper cutbacks. Non-profit community organizations, too, are facing human resource shortages. Many schools and community organizations have turned to volunteers in an attempt to compensate, yet are finding it difficult to locate all the volunteer resources they require.

The notion of engaging older adults, therefore, makes good sense from the "double social utility" perspective. It offers the chance to engage an experienced and underutilized segment of the population to benefit an underfunded and human resource starved sector of the economy.

HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT

In addition to efficiently shuffling resources and requirements, the elder-youth connection may well constitute an excellent "developmental fit," with both parties standing to gain emotionally, socially and intellectually.

Adolescents, Isolation and Development

Healthy adolescent development is a complex process, one that includes needs for a sense of safety, membership, self-worth, independence, companionship, and competence. As Karen Pittman contends, such development cannot occur in a vacuum, but requires a social context, of "home, school, community organizations, the block, the mall, the alley, the rec center" and so on, a context that can be "positive or negative; strong or weak."[19]

Essential ingredients in adolescent development are adults who interact with young people directly. Uri Bronfenbrenner has made the case for the developmental importance of face-to-face adult contact in the Two Worlds of Childhood and The Ecology of Human

Development, arguing that "activity, role, and interpersonal relation" are the essential elements in human development. He hypothesizes that development is stimulated by "progressively more complex patterns of reciprocal activity" with other people, particularly adults. Bronfenbrenner sees as most important those adult-youth relationships that achieve an optimal "balance of challenge and support."[20]

Sociologist James Coleman has characterized this process in terms of "social capital, which he defines as "the norms, the social networks, and the relationships between adults and children that are of value for the child's growing up." He argues, in studies of relative achievement between public and Catholic school students, that it is enhanced social capital, rather than greater curricular demands, that is responsible for superior performance by parochial school students.[21]

Researchers conducting longitudinal studies on young people growing up in at-risk environments have come to similar conclusions about the importance of informal adult support to healthy child and adolescent development. One of the most important of these investigations is the Kauai Longitudinal Study, conducted across more than three decades and involving over 700 youth.

In this study, psychologist Emmy E. Werner of the University of California-Davis, found that numerous high-risk children, "in spite of exposure to reproductive stress, discordant and impoverished home lives and uneducated, alcoholic or mentally disturbed parents, went on to develop healthy personalities, stable careers and strong interpersonal relationships." In seeking to determine why, Werner and her colleagues found special significance in a number of protective factors, critical among them informal sources of social support. According to Werner, "Our research on resilient children has shown that other people in a child's life--grandparents, older siblings, day-care providers or teachers--can play a supportive role if a parent is incapacitated or unavailable."[22] As her comment about grandparents suggests, Werner found that older adults in particular were important sources of informal support for the youth of Kauai.

Werner's longitudinal findings are similar to those of a number of urban ethnographers, including Terry Williams and William Kornblum, who found in their study Growing Up Poor that "the probabilities that a teenager will end up on the corner or in a stable job" are influenced by "the presence or absence of adult mentors."[23]

These findings from informal settings square with an accumulation of research evidence from social programs and schools, in a wide variety of settings ranging from large scale demonstration projects to community based efforts. The presence of support

from adults has been consistently identified as an important component of effective initiatives.[24]

However, despite accumulating evidence that face-to-face adult caring and contact is important to the healthy development of youth, oppportunities for such contact are becoming ever more scarce. As the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development observes, "many young people feel a desperate sense of isolation. Surrounded only by their equally confused peers, too many make poor decisions with harmful or lethal consequences." This conclusion is echoed as well by numerous other groups, including the recent National Commission on Children, which laments: "Unfortunately, too few adults invest the personal time and effort to encourage, guide and befriend young people who are struggling to develop the skills and confidence necessary for a successful and satisfying adult life."[25]

As these reports and others conclude, due to changes in family structure, neighborhoods, work and public institutions, young people can no longer count on the kind of adult contact once available in their immediate environment.

This isolation is seen as particularly problematic for adolescents growing up in poverty, confronting far greater stress than their middle class contemporaries and living in neighborhoods increasingly segregated not only by race, but by class as well. This isolation is seen not only as diminishing their immediate quality of life, but as resulting in missed developmental opportunities and problem behavior. Coleman even suggests a link to suicide, arguing that "the extraordinary increase in the suicide rate among teenagers in America would be regarded by Durkheim as an indicator of the growth in their social isolation."[26]

The philosopher Cornel West concurs, contending that this isolation contributes to a growing sense of "nihilism" among many inner-city youth, a sense which West defines as "the lived experience of coping with a life of horrifying meaninglessness, hopelessness, and (most important) lovelessness." For West, this state results in a "numbing detachment from others and a self-destructive disposition toward the world."[27]

Elders, Isolation, and Generativity

As with youth, isolation is a serious problem for many older adults in our society. Thirteen percent of adults over 65 report profound loneliness, while 70 percent report missing the social contact they enjoyed prior to retirement and old age.[28]

Equally problematic is the loss of useful roles and regular income that often accompanies older adulthood; though this problem in the past primarily affected men, it now afflicts an increasing number of women. Fifty-five percent of elder respon-

dents to a Louis Harris poll lament the loss of usefulness after retirement, while research conducted at the University of Maryland reveals that while retirement age frees up 25 hours a week for men and 18 for women, the majority of this free time is spent either watching television or doing housework.[29]

Not surprisingly, loneliness and loss of purpose have been linked to deterioration among elders. A 20-year study conducted by the Human Population Laboratory concludes that people who are socially isolated have a much higher risk of illness and death than those engaged with friends and family. These findings are consistent with research at the University of California suggesting a connection between the development of support networks and improved mental and physical health among older adults living in single room occupancy hotels.[30]

Alternately, volunteer activities that entail social contact and productive roles have been shown to improve significantly the circumstances of elderly participants. The psychiatrist Olga Knopf describes voluntarism as "an exquisite form of occupational therapy." One important study of persons over 65 volunteering 15 hours a week found they were "significantly more satisfied with life, have a stronger will to live, [and] report fewer somatic, anxious and depressive symptoms than those who do not engage in volunteer work." Numerous studies of elder volunteers conclude that they may derive even more from the enterprise than those supposedly being served.[31]

Danzig and Szanton, in a review of the literature on older volunteers and self-esteem, find that volunteer activities satisfy a need on the part of many older adults to repay benefits they have reaped from society over time. They find satisfaction in meeting the needs of others, and respond positively to the opportunity to learn.[32]

Another important and often cited benefit associated with elder voluntarism is that of acquaintanceship, through relationships with those being served, through bonds with other volunteers, and through attachments to program staff.

These findings are consistent with Erik Erikson's position that altruistic activity involving acquaintanceship with younger generations is particularly important to healthy development of older adults--to satisfying what he describes as the impulse to generativity. Generativity, for Erikson, is the "instinctual drive to create and care for new life,"[33] essentially taking care "to pass on to the next generation what you've contributed to life."[34] Erikson's notion contains two facets, one deriving from the Greek work *caritas*, which he defines broadly as a sense of caring for others, the second emanating from *agape*, which the psychoanalyst interprets as a kind of empathy.

For Erikson, these impulses come together in the developmentally successful older adult as an appreciation of human interdependence, most fully expressed in concern about post rity. The final crisis of life, he states simply, involves coming to terms with the notion, "I am what survives of me."[35]

A MORE CIVIL SOCIETY

A third important argument for elder service to youth is that it counteracts the problem of social disengagement so prevalent in our society today.[36] In the narrowest sense, intergenerational elder service is a way of combatting indifference on the part of older adults to the problems of inner city youth; of developing a sense of stake between the generations; and of helping build an expanded constituency for young people. There is evidence to suggest that these programs can work in just such a way.

In the early 1980s, for example, Miami began aggressively pursuing elder school volunteers, building a corps of 2,500. These volunteers became the linchpin in a campaign among seniors to pass an important school bond issue. In March 1988, 72 percent of seniors voted for the bond, worth nearly a billion dollars, enabling the bill to squeak through. Stories from Brookline, Massachusetts and elsewhere follow similar lines.[37]

With these results in mind, school districts around the country are mounting programs to engage elder volunteers, to build involvement in education and youth through direct contact. These efforts are significant not only with regard to the elder population. As Richard Lerer, Superintendent of the Southern Westchester Board of Cooperative Education says, "We're going to have more and more people living in local communities without children in school. It becomes critical therefore for school districts to understand this phenomenon and to inform and involve these people."[38]

However, the importance of reengagement goes deeper than political expediency, or even the developmental benefits or resource efficiency concerns raised in earlier sections. At root, reengaging elders in the concerns of youth and the younger generation is about preserving essential features of what might be called "civil society."

The basis for civil society is valuing interdependence. It is what Vaclav Havel talked about when he addressed Congress in 1990, stating simply, "the only genuine backbone of all our actions--if they be moral--is responsibility," responsibility for strangers, responsibility for posterity, responsibility for the social fabric.

As we near the end of the 20th century, many have come to the conclusion that the fabric of civil society is unravelling. Sociologist Alan Wolfe wonders whether we are losing "what is social about us," while Todd Gitlin writes that in the America of the "main chance and the fast deal," little by little, "our cultural infrastructure seems to be coming apart along with the bridges and roads."[39]

In this context, the ideal of engaging elders to serve youth is compelling, in the words of David Liederman, as a way of "maintaining a sense of community." John Gato, New York's 1991 teacher of the year, adds to these sentiments: "Without children and old people mixing in daily life," observes Gato, "a community has no future and no past, only a continuous present."[40]

Several years ago, Erikson, himself in old age, described this "continuous present" as a general and debilitating loss of generativity in our culture:

> The only thing that can save us as a species is seeing how we're not thinking about future generations in the way we live. What's lacking is generativity, a generativity that will promote positive values in the lives of the next generation. Unfortunately, we set the example of greed, wanting a bigger and better everything, with no thought of what will make it a better world for our great-grandchildren. That's why we go on depleting the earth: we're not thinking of the next generations.[41]

Berkeley sociologist and cultural critic Robert Bellah reaches similar conclusions. Bellah draws on the philosopher Albert Borgmann in characterizing America as a "quintessentially adolescent nation, one in which the main problem is finding our separate selfhood, appropriate enough for real adolescents, but disturbing if one remains stuck with that problem and never outgrows it." Rather, he adds, "the virtue Americans most need today is the virtue of 'generativity,' the care that one generation gives to the next."

Bellah points out that while Erikson initially situated generativity in the concern of parents for children, "he extends it far beyond the family so that it becomes the virtue by means of which we care for all persons and things we have been entrusted with."[42]

Perhaps the most important repository of generativity--what Bellah calls "an overall philosophy of generative interdependence (as opposed to narrowly self-interested individualism)"--resides in the elder population. A society where elders and youth are connected in constructive and interdependent fashion might well be both more generative and more civil.

III. THE ELDER SERVICE AND INTERGENERATIONAL LANDSCAPE

Before going on to analyze the current state of elder service and intergenerational programming, and to examine that field in relation to the rationale set out in the previous section, it is first necessary to map the existing landscape.

The following sections will describe the field, focusing on service activities that involve older adults directly with children and youth from low-income neighborhoods, summarizing efforts engaging youth in service to elders, and reviewing the policy and support activities being conducted to promote intergenerational cooperation.

THE ELDER SERVICE LANDSCAPE

Program activities are concentrated in school volunteer projects, community based initiatives, government programs and demonstration projects.

School Volunteer Efforts

Organized school volunteer programs exist in most districts around the country, and approximately one million adults volunteer full or part-time in schools annually.[43] One survey estimates that as many as a quarter of these volunteers are older adults.[44] The use of elders was stimulated by support from the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation in the late 1970s, and many programs have continued to recruit seniors.

Most school volunteers work with elementary school students, and this trend is even more pronounced with respect to older adults. However, there are a number of efforts around the country that engage elders in working directly with adolescents.

As mentioned above, 2,500 of Miami's 15,000 school volunteers are older adults. The local AARP chapter has been actively involved in the effort, which includes the usual mix of tutoring and teacher aide roles, but also some more unusual, apprenticeship-like efforts. At the Miami Agricultural Center, for example, a retired veterinarian, retired horticulturist, retired carpenter, and retired dog trainer and breeder work with at-risk students to care for and train animals, renovate buildings and grow plants.[45]

In Boston, the school volunteer program has been recruiting elders, some of whom work with disadvantaged adolescents in tutoring and mentoring programs. In Chicago, Intergenerational Tutoring is a collaboration between the Chicago public schools and the city's Department of Aging; retirees work with sixth graders on Saturdays for two hours at a senior center in a program that involves about 100 individuals. In Ann Arbor, 35

older adults work in middle and high schools, many of them with at-risk students.[46] Projects of this sort exist, on a small scale, in various other districts around the country, including Los Angeles, Dallas, Asheville and San Francisco.

An unusual effort is underway in Middletown, PA, where a handful of at-risk middle school students paired with elder volunteers are jointly providing tutoring for younger students. The older and younger partners meet themselves once a week to review progress and lessons learned.[47]

And at the state level, California is conducting a campaign, "You Can Shape the Future," focusing on recruitment of older volunteers to serve as tutors, teachers aides, ESL instructors and in various one-to-one roles with students. Eleven districts are now participating in the state-funded intergenerational effort.[48]

Nationally, AARP has joined in a collaboration with the National Association of Partners in Education to promote the use of older volunteers in schools and to train school volunteer coordinators on using older volunteers effectively.

Community Based Efforts

Alongside efforts in schools and operating through school volunteer structures are a scattering of community-based efforts that have sprung up around the country.

Created and administered by a local chapter of the International Union of Electrical Workers, IUE/The Work Connection is an alternative sentencing program for jail-bound youngsters between the ages of 18 and 22. These young people find private sector jobs through the program and are supported on a one-to-one basis by older "mentors." The mentors--retired union members, police officers and other members of the community--stay with the young people for about six months, helping them find work, monitoring performance and attendance, and providing personal support.[49]

Although the IUE/Work Connection model is unique, a few other local unions involve retirees with at-risk youth, including a chapter of the Communication Workers of America in northern Florida.

Another example of a community-based effort is the Teen Moms program in Portland, ME, run out of the highly regarded Portland West neighborhood organization. The project provides family support to adolescent single mothers and their children. The focus of Teen Moms is on preventing child abuse by contacting the mothers early, often before they have given birth, and providing long-term support. The older women come to the girls' houses one day a week, providing friendship, counseling and training in life skills. The effort has received funding from the National Center

on Child Abuse and Neglect of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.[50]

Another form of family support program involving older adults and youth has grown up in recent years. Rather than engaging elders to support other people's families, these efforts are designed to support elders who are forced into parenting duties as a result of their children being unable to parent, often as a result of crack, AIDS or other debilitating situations. The Pediatric AIDS Respite Program of Cornell Medical Center provides volunteers four hours each week to spell grandparents who are caring for grandchildren with AIDS. Other programs around the country, including a notable effort in Oakland, are not only providing respite but helping train these elders to be better parents. Although the programs often involve seniors caring for young children, these youngsters will soon be adolescents, and these programs will need to adapt.[51]

Government Programs

Alongside these efforts, primarily based in private, not-for-profit organizations, is an important set of programs initiated by the federal government. There are numerous federal vehicles for elder voluntarism, among them the Service Corps of Retired Executives operated by the Small Business Administration and the Elder Corps currently being organized by the Administration on Aging. However, the two initiatives that most extensively serve youth are the Foster Grandparent and RSVP programs, which along with the Senior Companion program (a program in which seniors serve other seniors), constitute the Older American Volunteer Programs (OAVP) run by ACTION.

The Foster Grandparent program was initiated in 1965 by the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) as part of a mandate "to consider the special problems of the elderly poor," and was constructed to benefit both low income, lonely older adults and disadvantaged children. In its early years, assignments were primarily in institutional settings, such as pediatrics wards of hospitals.[52]

The Retired Senior Volunteer Program, or RSVP as it is generally known, evolved out of Project SERVE, which was started in 1967 in Staten Island as an initiative of the Community Service Society. The original SERVE project placed 23 elder volunteers at a residential home for developmentally disabled youth, becoming the prototype for RSVP, founded in 1969 as part of the reauthorization of the Older Americans Act of 1965.

In 1973, both programs were authorized by Title II of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act and put under the administration of ACTION.

At present, RSVP includes over 400,000 volunteers serving parttime, several hours per week, in 750 projects around the country. Approximately half the RSVP volunteers are low-income persons, and they work an average of five hours a week.[53] Annual federal support for RSVP is approximately $33 million, supplemented by an additional $33.6 million from state and local governments and the private sector.

RSVP volunteers work in a wide variety of unstipended jobs, handing out food in soup kitchens, serving as museum docents, visiting the homebound elderly, providing companionship to AIDS patients and reading to the blind. A portion of RSVP volunteers are working with at-risk youth, tutoring in inner-city schools, providing after-school care, serving as drug counselors, and supporting teenage mothers. The volunteers receive no stipend, but are provided transportation and meal reimbursements.

The Foster Grandparent Program has grown from 782 volunteers in 1966 to 27,200 by mid-1991, from 33 projects to 263, from $5 million in federal appropriations to just under $60 million. The program also receives an additional $27 million in state and local government and private support. In 1991, Foster Grandparents provided an estimated 28,400,000 hours of service to children and youth.

Foster Grandparents, whose incomes must be below 125 percent of the national poverty level to qualify, "work on a one-to-one basis with children and young people (under the age of 21) beset by such problems as abuse and neglect, physical and emotional handicaps, drug and alcohol abuse, mental retardation, illiteracy, juvenile delinquency, or teenage pregnancy." The volunteers work 20 hours a week, receive a non-taxable stipend of $2.35 per hour for their efforts, plus transportation, a hot meal, and some health benefits. Most are women (89%); half are white (51%), the other half black (35%), Hispanic (9%), Asian (2%), and Native American (3%). Most of the volunteers are in urban areas (62%); 38 percent are between 60 and 69, 48 percent between 70 and 79.

The young people served are primarily children, although the percentage of adolescents is growing. In FY 1990, 36 percent of young people participating in the program were between the ages of 0 and 5, 38 percent were between 6 and 12, and 21 percent were between 13 and 20. At least half the young people in the program fall into the at-risk categories commonly used, such as teenage parents or educationally disadvantaged. At present, 85 percent of Foster Grandparents work in non-residential settings, schools, social programs, libraries, day care centers and community organizations.

These programs constitute excellent examples of public/private partnership, with both Foster Grandparents and RSVP using their federal funding to leverage substantial state, local and private

dollars, which amount to approximately a third of Foster Grandparent's support and half of RSVP's.

Partnership is present at the management level as well. In RSVP, for example, the program is run locally by private non-profit agencies, including local chapters of the United Way, Voluntary Action Councils, area agencies on aging, Red Cross chapters, and a range of other entities. These sponsors are also required to establish Advisory Councils comprised of representatives from the community, a quarter of whom must be individuals 60 and older. Local RSVP programs are overseen by state and regional ACTION offices.

In 1989, the OAVP programs were enhanced through P.L. 101-204 of the Domestic Service Amendments of 1989, which directs ACTION to use one-third of any appropriations increases for new "Programs of National Significance" designed to enable existing RSVP, Foster Grandparents, and Senior Companion projects to develop new or expanded volunteer components in "national significance" areas: programs providing family support to teenage parents; mentoring programs that match senior volunteers with youth who need guidance; adult and school-based literacy programs; programs designed to decrease drug and alcohol abuse; before and after-school programs sponsored by organizations such as libraries that service children of working parents; and programs involving senior volunteers tutoring educationally disadvantaged children on a one-on-one basis.

Demonstration Projects

Alongside school volunteer programs, and community based and federal efforts involving elder service and adolescents, reside a diverse set of demonstration projects. These projects are operating in a variety of school and community settings.

Big Brothers/Big Sisters Demonstration

Dagmar McGill, Deputy National Executive Director of Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America (BB/BSA), points out that older volunteers were an important part of BB/BS programs around the country several decades ago. However, according to a 1988 survey commissioned by the organization, fewer than 1,400 of the approximately 60,000 current volunteers are over age 55, and nearly half the local agencies have no older adult volunteers. According to McGill: "as lifestyles changed in our society, with men and women getting married later in life, more women working outside the home, we have somehow lost one of our most valuable resources in working with young people today--the older adult."[54]

In 1988, with funding support from the Mott Foundation, Exxon Fund for Productive Aging and the H. W. Durham Foundation, BB/BSA initiated a demonstration project with the intention of recouping this loss. The objectives identified for this initiative were to uncover ways in which elders could be integrated into BB/BS programs; to develop and test models using elder volunteers; and to develop and disseminate recruitment and training materials to help agencies around the country implement intergenerational components.

In the Fall of 1988, a call for proposals was issued to local agencies, and 25 responded. Nine--in Eureka, CA, Coral Gables, FL, Waterloo, IA, Lansing, MI, Lincoln, NE, Auburn, NY, Oak Ridge, TN, San Antonio, TX, and Milwaukee, WI--were selected as pilot agencies. Temple University's Center for Intergenerational Learning was engaged to conduct training for these agencies.

In 1991, BB/BSA returned to the Mott Foundation for $250,000 in support of "Phase II of Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America's efforts to reach and engage older men and women in the important work of helping children at-risk have enriching experiences in their young lives." Based on the experience of the initial demonstration, the organization determined in Phase II to focus on elementary school age children and to conduct the project by working with specific schools in the community. They also determined to form several partnerships with national organizations to assist in the recruitment of elder volunteers, including AARP's Volunteer Talent Bank, the National Retiree Volunteer Center and the Tuskegee Airmen. These partnerships are expected to yield 160 older adult volunteers. Phase II is expected to be conducted during 1992 and 1993, with an evaluation completed by 1993.[55]

Mission Possible: Churches Supporting Fragile Families

The Florence V. Burden Foundation, in 1986, commissioned the development of a demonstration project designed to reduce delinquency by strengthening families through the provision of older mentors drawn from church congregations. Burden chose the National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) to manage and document the demonstration, conducted in three cities: Washington, D.C., Hartford and New York. In each city, two churches and a divinity school are participating.

According to NCPC, "Churches, particularly black churches, have traditionally served as extended families for members of their congregations. Today, the need for an extended family is great. Pastors and divinity schools are questioning how a family ministry can be built up to meet this need, particularly for fragile families. The demonstration...gives churches one way to recreate and strengthen the extended family."[56]

Each Mission Possible church, selected for its urban congregation and history of community leadership, was provided a small grant and challenged to devise ways to support families in need, "with an emphasis on selecting and training elderly members of the congregation as mentors." NCPC provided training and technical assistance and was responsible for bringing together the churches and the divinity schools. The seminaries provided advice, expertise, "and helped to provide theological grounding for a family/community ministry," along with developing resource lists of community services available to mentors.

At the Shiloh Baptist Church in Washington, the Parent Aid Program provided mentors to parents. The mentor were expected to serve as a liaison to school personnel and social service agencies, help the parents develop better child-raising skills, and get them more involved in the church. The mentors were selected because of their extensive child-raising experience.

At the Bridge Street AME Church in Brooklyn, the Grandparent Mentoring Program matched elders with single parent families, usually with young mothers. Some of the families were drawn from the congregation and its day care program. The mentors participated in family activities and were expected to provide support when the inevitable crises hit.

The Mothers on the Move Spiritually (MOMS) program of St. Theresa of Avila Catholic Church in Washington, DC, engaged elder members of the congregation in visits to a juvenile detention facility and a home for young mothers "to provide nurturing and guidance to these young men and women." In addition, Friday night counseling sessions were held for families needing help.

In the three cities, the program trained a total of 50-60 mentors and involved 40 families, according to the NCPC report, with "most churches ending up with five to eight mentored families."

Linking Lifetimes

The most ambitious of the demonstrations involving elders and at-risk youth is Linking Lifetimes, developed by the Temple University Center for Intergenerational Learning. Linking Lifetimes was formed in 1989 as a "research and demonstration initiative created to systematically promote the development of programs that provide support to vulnerable youth while simultaneously enabling older adults to remain productive members of our society." The 9 sites, located in Syracuse, Memphis, Miami, Los Angeles, Hartford, Washington, DC, Springfield MA, and St. Petersberg, Florida, include a seven focused on adolescents in schools and community organizations, and two focused on adjudicated youth. As of December 31, 1991, Linking Lifetimes had engaged 172 elder mentors and 307 youth.[57]

The mentors targeted are 55 years or older. They receive both pre-service and in-service training in strategies for helping youth develop social competency and life-coping skills; participate in monthly support group meetings; receive stipends to help defray the costs of volunteering; and spend a minimum of two hours a week in face-to-face contact with their young partners.

Linking Lifetimes also strives to integrate the mentoring provided with other complementary interventions, and each project is staffed by a paid project coordinator.

The Linking Lifetimes sites are quite diverse, although each site is expected to maintain at least 20 active mentors. In St. Petersburg, Florida, youth from the Boys' Clubs are matched with elders recruited by Jewish Family Services. One of the Boys Clubs is located adjacent to a public housing project and serves a predominately minority population. In Miami, the program targets seniors and youth residing in two large housing projects: Liberty Square and Edison Square. The youth are middle school age. In Memphis, Linking Lifetimes targets seventh and eighth grade mothers who attend a special alternative high school to keep pregnant teenagers in school. In Springfield, in collaboration with the Massachusetts Department of Youth Services (DYS), adjudicated youth are referred by DYS caseworkers for matching with elders. Youth are given the opportunity to participate in the program as an alternative to other court mandated sentences.

Linking Lifetimes is funded by the Mott Foundation, Burden Foundation, Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, Ittleson Foundation, H.W. Durham Foundation and Exxon Fund for Productive Aging. Research on the project is being conducted by Public/Private Ventures and the National Institute for Work and Learning. The project seeks, at its broadest, to link the aging, youth service, education and criminal justice systems.

Public/Private Ventures Intergenerational Mentoring Pilot Demonstration

Just getting underway, this demonstration pilot's two sites are located in Atlanta and St. Louis, and have been developed to test whether intergenerational mentoring projects can be conducted at scale (the goal is 100 mentors and 100 youth at each site) and whether these efforts can be integrated into large public bureaucracies (in both cases the state division of youth services, the department that runs the youth detention system).

Although the mentors recruited will not all be elders, sites are directed to get 50 percent of their recruits from the older adult population. Youth in the program are all adjudicated, will range in age from 12 through 17 and will most likely be between the ages of 14 and 16.

In Atlanta, the project involves a collaboration between the NAACP and the state Division of Youth Services. The NAACP regional office is handling all recruitment, and has developed a network of community organizations for that purpose. In St. Louis, there is no lead community group, but various organizations have pledged their help. Both sites are aiming to develop a "service triangle" between the mentor, youth and case worker, with the goal of helping the youngster make a more successful transition back home.

Research on the project will include three parts: an implementation study focused on the process of collaboration; a relationships study to understand why relationships do and don't form; and an outcomes study. Funding for the project comes from the Pinkerton
Foundation, the Commonwealth Fund, and the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

AARP Parent Aide Demonstration

With funding from the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, AARP initiated an intergenerational Parent Aide pilot project in 1984. AARP first conducted a survey of 200 such projects around the country before selecting five programs to be pilots. These included projects in Portland, Maine; Ann Arbor; Winston-Salem; Lincoln, Nebraska; and Hagerstown, Maryland. The project involved 40 older volunteers working with 135 children in 63 families. In addition, some of the parents involved in this project were teenagers.

The effort focused on developing working relationships between agencies representing older adults and child welfare organizations; promoting increased use of older volunteers in parent aide programs; and using the experience of the project to develop resource materials to be used by the parent aide network around the country. The effort resulted in publication of a series of documents, including a directory of programs and a resource guide.[58]

INTERGENERATIONAL YOUTH SERVICE

The field of intergenerational youth service programs--programs where adolescents are engaged in providing service to older adults--is not the focus of this paper, and is well-covered elsewhere.[59] However, some examples of these programs are highlighted here to illustrate additional avenues for elder-youth contact that can be developmental in nature.

Intergenerational Work/Study Program

This effort was launched in 1987 by the New York City Department of Aging. Its goal is to help high school students at-risk of dropping out, and in danger of not making it in the job market or higher education, through providing supervised part-time work experience at agencies serving older adults.

Between 20 and 40 students are drawn from each of 16 participating high schools, for a total of nearly 400 students. They are assigned to over 90 sites in all five boroughs of New York, including senior centers, nursing homes and home care agencies. The students work 10-15 hours per week. Four days a week they split their day between the work site and school; on the fifth day, they participate in a special curriculum focusing on issues of aging and the world of work. The students receive both stipends and academic credit for their work.

One of the most important features of this project is its emphasis on interpersonal contact. Tasks are structured so that students spend a minimum of 25 percent of their time in close interaction with older adults. According to one description of the program, "Efforts are made to foster informal 'grandparent/grandchild' relationships. Individual older adults are also recruited, either from the agency population or from retiree groups, to provide more formal mentoring."[60]

City Volunteer Corps (CVC)

Another New York City effort, the City Volunteer Corps (CVC) is a pioneer in the youth conservation and service corps field in enabling corpsmembers to serve older adults in the community. Corpsmembers in CVC sign up for one year of full-time stipended service to the city, working primarily in crews of 10 or more, under the supervision of a crewleader, and performing a mix of projects that involve physical labor and human service work. Most corpsmembers come from economically and educationally disadvantaged backgrounds, and a high percentage have dropped out of school.

Projects that corpsmembers engage in with older adults include: working as aides in skilled nursing units providing care to the frail elderly; visiting apartments of homebound elders; performing heavy duty cleaning designed to enable these seniors to remain in their homes; making home visits to hospice out-patients; providing consistent volunteer support to augment the work of hospital staff; and painting an entire senior center, then moving into the delivery of meals, shopping, escort services, and some apartment painting for elders in the neighborhood.

Like those in the Work/Study Program, the CVC tasks are often structured to provide a high-level of interpersonal contact between elders and youth.[61]

Other Projects

Other examples of intergenerational projects involving adolescents directly with older adults include one in a Manhattan junior high school where students are working jointly on a musical comedy written by a senior center member; an effort in New Jersey where young people in a summer intern program collaborate with residents of a senior housing project to develop a community conference on substance abuse; and an initiative in San Francisco where older youth do safety assessments and make improvements in the homes of frail elderly people.[62]

Several new initiatives are also worth recounting. The Girl Scouts of America recently initiated **Operation Care**, "a national program to help older persons who are at risk of losing their independence." The project will involve education concerning older adults and their needs; community action and coalition building on behalf of elders; the direct provision of services; and the development of program models that can be reproduced elsewhere.

The National Meals on Wheels Foundation is also initiating a project, **The Youth Volunteer Initiative**, designed to bring youth together with older adults. With funding from the Kellogg Foundation, the group will provide grants of $10,000 a year to five local Meals on Wheels programs to develop models designed to involve youth not only in service provision, but in understanding the aging experience and becoming advocates for older adults.

Y.E.S. (Youth Exchanging with Seniors) is another intergenerational youth service program, but one with an interesting twist. This effort links 4-H and Future Homemakers of America members with older adults in a 20-county region of West Texas to provide services to these seniors. This project is distinguished by its emphasis on older adults and youth working together to carry out joint projects that will benefit the community. Although the joint service model is less prevalent than the other types of efforts profiled thus far, new models are beginning to appear.[63]

POLICY, ADVOCACY, AND SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

Parallelling the programmatic activities described in the sections above are a set of efforts designed to stimulate intergenerational projects and promote policies to support cooperation between elders and youth.

Generations United was formed in 1986 in response to the generational equity debate. It is a national coalition designed to encourage collaboration between elders, youth and the organizations that represent them. The founding chairs of Generations

United were the Child Welfare League of America and the National Council on the Aging; in 1991, the American Association of Retired Persons and the Children's Defense Fund became co-chairs. The members of the organization number more than 100 groups (See Appendix C), including many prominent aging organizations such as American Association of Homes for the Aging, American Society on Aging, Asociacion Nacional ProPersonas Mayores, Gray Panthers, National Caucus and Center on Black Aged, National Council of Senior Citizens and National Association of State Unites on Aging. Statewide coalitions exist in California, Illinois, Massachusetts, New Mexico, New Jersey and New York.

Since its inception, Generations United has held conferences to discuss program and policy issues, and pursued a legislative agenda that currently includes health care reform, the Young Americans Act, Social Services Block Grants (Title XX), preventing abuse within families, strengthening grandparent-grandchild relationships, Supplemental Security Income, the Older Americans Act, the Family and Medical Leave Act, the National and Community Service Act, and the Budget Enforcement Agreement.

In addition to this coalition, a number of research and program development organizations exist around the country with the mission of promoting intergenerational programming. Two of the most active are in Pennsylvania. Already mentioned is Temple University's **Center on Intergenerational Learning**, which, in addition to Linking Lifetimes, is conducting a number of demonstration efforts, including a drug abuse prevention program involving older adults as mentors to middle school students. This project is funded with $1 million from the Office for Substance Abuse Prevention of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Generations Together, a unit of the University of Pittsburgh's Center for Social and Urban Research has produced a number of publications on intergenerational programming and instituted a series of demonstration and research projects, some involving at-risk adolescents.

A number of other organizations have also been involved in stimulating elder voluntarism and directing some of that activity toward youth. AARP includes a **Volunteer Talent Bank**, a computerized matching service that attempts to link AARP members in local chapters (as well as non-members) with appropriate volunteer opportunities. Currently, 13 organizations, including the Girl Scouts, Red Cross, and RSVP's Directors Association are participating in the Volunteer Talent Bank.

The **National Retiree Volunteer Center**, based in Minneapolis, attempts "to mobilize retirees through their corporations." The Children's Defense Fund has initiated the **Child Watch Visitation**

Project, designed to engage a broader constituency for youth, and has enlisted AARP to participate as one of seven partner organizations. AARP members are trained through the Project to advocate for youth.

Also on the advocacy side, are the **Executive Directors' Associations of the Older American Volunteer Programs**. These groups, which include the RSVP association and the Foster Grandparent associations, have pressed for additional funding and program changes designed to make the efforts more effective and more widely available.

IV. THE ELDER SERVICE GAP

The projects highlighted in Section III are encouraging in many respects. They contribute to a field that has grown over the past decade, one which since 1980 has seen the formation of a number of new demonstration projects, the creation of a new coalition of aging and youth organizations, and, in general, increased awareness about the need for intergenerational cooperation. As Nancy Henkin of Temple University points out, 10 years ago the word "intergenerational" could usually be counted on to elicit only sentimental images, of "brownie troops singing Christmas carols at a nursing home"--a response that is no longer true. There is now greater appreciation of the range of intergenerational programs.

Despite these encouraging signs, however, it would be a mistake to conclude that the elder service field is currently experiencing a renaissance. Indeed, there is hardly a "field" at all.

Instead, there are two somewhat distinct domains: one consisting of a loose collection of mostly non-governmental, community-based, and research and demonstration efforts; the other comprised of the ACTION-sponsored Older American Volunteer Programs (OAVP), particularly the Foster Grandparents and RSVP initiatives.

Neither component of this landscape is operating at full potential, although the OAVP programs are far more established than their fledgling counterparts, and may have a great deal more to teach us about eventually closing the "elder service gap"--the gulf that now exists between the compelling rationale for elder service we find in theory, and the much more modest reality that greets us in practice.

The following section will examine the experience of the intergenerational elder service field, looking both at lessons from the independent, non-governmental sector and at those emanating from the Older American Volunteer Programs.

CHARTING THE GAP

For all its diversity and entrepreneurial vigor, the independent sector of the elder service landscape is characterized by considerable flux. One of the most revealing facts about this sector is that it is impossible to count the programs in it, the reason being that so many programs simply come and go, their life cycles beginning with a dedicated entrepreneur who, struck by the logic of elder service, sets out with an appealing idea, some makeshift funding and lots of enthusiasm. All too often, however, the effort soon expires as the money runs out, the entrepreneur burns out, or moves on.

This pattern seems particularly true of elder service programs working with adolescents in poverty. To start, these efforts are relatively scarce, a fact that makes their fleeting nature all the more troubling. This situtation well characterizes the impressive but all too brief careers of a pair of community programs already described, IUE/The Work Connection and Teen Moms. Both were exemplary efforts that got off to impressive starts but were unable to find sustained support and achieve stability. This issue of ongoing support confronts even well-seeded demonstrations like Linking Lifetimes, where project leaders are currently searching for avenues to post-demonstration institutionalization. Attempts to contact programs listed in several directories of intergenerational initiatives further reveal a pattern of evanescence; one recent review found a preponderance of programs extinct shortly after publication.

Examination of the size of programs imparts a similarly sobering message. Not only do programs tend to come and go, but they tend also to be quite small. Even Linking Lifetimes--something of the "Cadillac" in this area--has struggled to maintain fewer than 200 mentors across its numerous sites; and Mission Possible has managed a total of about 50 in its five sites, and only through adding mentors from the middle-aged population. Most of the community programs described maintain only a handful of elder volunteers and have struggled on the recruitment front.

Next to the dearth of program activity and the small number of volunteers exists a similar shortage of evaluation research in this area. A literature search turned up only a handful of studies of intergenerational elder service programs with fewer still involving programs where elders serve at-risk youth. Most included very small numbers of participants, few measured effects on youth or control groups, and process research was difficult to locate. While the existing shreds of evidence are somewhat encouraging, there remains considerable work research to be done on the research front, and many open questions.

The limitations found in the program and research realms are matched in the area of technical assistance and advocacy. While the creation of Generations United eight years ago constituted an important breakthrough at the time and remains so today--in the sense of bringing together more than 100 aging and youth organizations around issues of considerable importance--the group has been handicapped throughout its history by staff and funding shortages. Generations United's annual cash budget is in the vicinity of $50,000, augmented by some in-kind contributions, principally from the Child Welfare League of America. Until recently, the organization was without even a single full-time staff person, while trying to pursue an ambitious policy agenda, provide technical assistance and develop a clearinghouse function. It now has one full-time staff member aided by a part-time assistant.

As George Kaplan states in a 1991 Phi Delta Kappan article, while it is heartening to know that aging and youth organizations have formed a coalition, "serious issue- and program-oriented collaboration is still a distant dream" for Generations United. In Kaplan's assessment:

> At this early phase of its life, Generations United can provide little more than a well-meaning skeleton that needs fleshing out and substantive commitments from the largely silent mass of membership groups that make up its impressive roster. In addition, the community of state and local intergenerational bodies around the country is still disappointingly small.[64]

The recent addition of the Children's Defense Fund and AARP as Generations United co-chairs and the appointment of a full-time Executive Director will undoubtedly help to make the "dream" Kaplan refers to less distant. Furthermore, Generations United has managed to establish its first data base (of intergenerational child care programs), and is in the process of developing a demonstration project (involving elders and at-risk youth working together in environmental projects in as many as six sites around the country). Even with these signs of progress, Generations United is nowhere near the size or strength required to accomplish the important mandate under which it was established.

Finally, the pattern of small scale activity and unrealized potential in this domain is reflected as well in a survey of aging organizations compiled for this report and in an informal review of youth organizations and through interviews with experts in the field. The survey did turn up a few projects designed to stimulate elder voluntarism involving children and youth, including efforts like the AARP Volunteer Talent Bank, the National Council on Aging's "Family Friends" project, and the National Hispanic Council on Aging "Project Amor" assisting at-risk Latino youth through mentoring with older adults. In addition, some other organizations, including the American Association of Homes for the Aging and the National Association of State Units on Aging (NASUA), reported intergenerational programs (See Appendix). However, on the whole, efforts appear relatively scarce and quite modest in scale.

EXPLAINING THE GAP

These findings raise the important question of "why"? Why is it that we have made such modest progress in translating the logic of intergenerational service into a thriving reality? To what obstacles can we attribute so much unfulfilled promise? Partial answers can be found in a set of cultural, organizational and programmatic barriers.

Cultural Stereotypes and Obstacles

Researchers at the Brookdale Center on Aging in New York recently observed that while support for intergenerational efforts has in some ways increased, all too often "that support, in the proverbial phrase, is a 'mile wide and an inch deep.'"[65] Their comment points to a deep-seated ambivalence about older adults as serious, capable, and productive citizens and service-providers, and begins to get at some of the cultural stereotypes and obstacles confronting elder service initiatives.

On the one hand, everybody loves the idea of older adults working with children. These programs make terrific human interest stories and can be counted on to elicit wide applause. But there is often an unwillingness to move past the sentimental when it comes to these programs. This fact may account for why so much research in the intergenerational field is focused on measuring good feelings and participant attitudes. (It may also account, in part, for the preponderance of programs matching older adults with babies. While there is undoubtedly a real need for intergenerational child care programs, their relative popularity may also suggest a somewhat childlike view of elders.)

The tendency to undervalue older adults, to assume the frailty of elders, to stereotype seniors, constitutes the backbone of the "ageism" that gerontologist Robert Butler first labeled in 1968; what the writer Harold Sheppard has called a "deep-rooted revulsion at the perceived disintegration, physically and otherwise...supposed inevitably to take hold at a given birthday, 65 or thereabouts, or even earlier."[66]

The continuing vitality of ageism in the sphere of voluntarism is well illustrated by a recent New York Times article informing readers that according to, "experts...the image and purpose of volunteerism is being transformed," from "retirees providing supplementary services--the 'gray ladies' who push book carts through hospitals," to younger adults capable of tackling serious social problems. The piece quotes a spokesman for New York Cares, a group catering to Baby Boomer volunteers: "Young professionals thought volunteering was something blue-haired ladies in candy-striped suits did." He explained how his group was hoping to resuscitate the image of altruism from the realm of the decrepit.[67]

These patronizing and stereotyped images of "blue haired ladies" reveal some of the cultural barriers facing efforts to engage older volunteers in challenging work with youth. These images may well be self-fulfilling as they become internalized by elders and render them more reluctant to come forward to volunteer for challenging work with young people.

Stereotypes of needy or ineffectual elders, ironically, are often perpetuated by professionals in the aging field, who focus far more on the deficiencies than the resources of elders. This professional culture of dependency leads to discouraging opportunities for elders to become involved in productive contact with youth, out of the perception that older adults can't handle such a challenging enterprise.

Age Segregation

Another barrier to intergenerational programming and cooperation, widespread age-segregation in our society, also has a cultural dimension. Older adults and youth, deprived of natural day-to-day contact, may be suspicious of each other and reluctant to join a program designed to bring them together. This barrier is likely to be compounded when class and social distance are also present; and it can be frightening for outside volunteers to work in high-risk neighborhoods.[68]

Age-segregation is more than cultural, however; it is often a geographic phenomenon as well. In practice, many older adults live in age-segregated environments, ranging from formal retirement communities to apartment buildings and neighborhoods with concentrations of other older adults. Seniors also spend much of their time in age-segregated settings, like senior centers--as do young people, who tend to be either in school or in settings that are youth-focused. For these reasons, getting elders together with youth can require special arrangements (such as transportation) in order to be accomplished.

Age-segregation is a barrier at the organizational level as well. In general, aging and youth organizations are not accustomed to working together, few have built-in channels for collaboration, and most are focused on age-specific mandates. This reality is present in the funding sphere too, where government agencies and private philanthropic groups are both often organized by age. As a result, funding for intergenerational projects can require crossing categorical boundaries, and may remain exceptional as a result.

Budgetary Constraints

Another barrier to intergenerational programs is also financial in origin. A great many human service organizations are facing severe budgetary constraints. These conditions militate against innovation as organizations struggle to preserve core functions--even when various innovations might actually ease the crunch.

Youth program operators interviewed for this report admitted reluctance to spend scarce time and staff resources to try out intergenerational efforts that might not work. They recounted a variety of concerns: would older adults really show up to work

with young people in poverty? Would they really to able to help? Would the time and effort required to start up and oversee the effort exceed potential benefits? Would seed funding for such efforts simply dry up after putting in considerable time and energy to get a program off the ground?

A Difficult Enterprise

Based on the track record thus far of many elder service and volunteer programs, these concerns appear to have some basis in reality. An abiding lesson from this experience is that bringing elders and youth together can be a difficult and challenging enterprise. Recruitment has been a persistent issue. Funding has been difficult to sustain. Matching young people and elders takes some effort, and outcomes are not always rosy.

Overall, however, this scenario is hardly unique to elder service programs. Indeed, a consistent lesson of volunteer efforts focused on assisting young people in poverty has been that this is tough and serious work, regardless of the age of the volunteers. In the Teach for America program, which places recent college graduates in inner-city classrooms, this lesson has been underlined. The middle-class, middle-aged adults who make up the mentoring movement have similarly discovered how hard it can be not only "to make a connection" across a great social divide, but to "make a difference" in the lives of young people confronting poverty.[69]

Elders are no exception to these social realities. They face many of the same barriers as young and middle-aged adults when working to assist vulnerable youth living in battered and impoverished communities.

RAYS OF HOPE

Without discounting the seriousness of the caveats and cautions discussed above, the experience of the public sector of the elder service landscape, the federally-sponsored OAVP programs, provides a wholly different outlook on the prospects of intergenerational elder service. Indeed, the record of Foster Grandparents and RSVP offers some reasons for optimism--along with a set of lessons for future action.

Scale and Longevity

Perhaps the most basic, and important, lesson emerging from the OAVP efforts is that this enterprise can be undertaken at scale. While it is difficult to even guess at numbers for the rest of the field, there are, as already noted, very large numbers of seniors participating in the OAVP programs--400,000 older adults working through RSVP and 27,000 through Foster Grandparents. And

because Foster Grandparents work 20 hours per week, last year alone, volunteers in that program logged over 28 million hours of service--all of it with children and youth, most of it with children and youth growing up in poverty. While other elder service programs are having recruitment problems, Foster Grandparents has a waiting list of over 6,000--equivalent to nearly a quarter of the existing FGP slots. While other volunteer programs for youth are plagued by high rates of turnover, Foster Grandparents stay for extended periods of time, with retention in some programs averaging over seven years.[70]

In addition, these programs have managed to survive for nearly a generation, not a small accomplishment in the arena of human services (Foster Grandparents is now 27 years old, and RSVP 22), building bi-partisan support and growing steadily during that period. Foster Grandparents is without doubt the only social program that can claim, simultaneously, being founded by Sargent Shriver during the heyday of the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO)--and serving as the subject of an admiring book by Nancy Reagan during the period when Ronald Reagan was vigorously dismantling the apparatus of the Great Society.

Documentation of Effectiveness

Over the past generation, Foster Grandparents has also managed to demonstrate a record of effectiveness documented in some 24 studies (See Appendix)--a level of research scrutiny that stands in sharp relief to the rest of the elder service field. Indeed, the Foster Grandparent Program would likely not have survived during the 1970s except for longitudinal research demonstrating its beneficial effects on both older persons and on the children they helped.

A seven-year study of the Detroit area Foster Grandparents program by the Merrill Palmer Institute and Wayne State University Institute of Gerontology found that "forming intense, personal bonds with their individual foster grandchildren was easy and natural for most of the elders in the project, and that the children also soon 'adopted' them as grandparents." The longitudinal study further found that "foster grandparenting had a very positive impact on the children's development in both intellectual and social areas."[71]

On the elders' side, the Wayne State study located an impressive set of benefits, including "increased self esteem, renewed feelings of health and vigor, new and satisfying social relationships with peers," along with greater financial security and satisfaction with the direction of their lives. Follow-up studies indicated that active Foster Grandparents were more optimistic about the future than a comparable national sample of older persons.

Other studies of Foster Grandparent programs have supported the results of the Detroit studies, including one conducted by a division of the consulting group, Booz, Allen. It examined 20 percent of all the programs operating in the country and found that 75 percent of the Foster Grandparents in the national sample considered the program to be one of the most important events in their lives over the preceding five years. Furthermore, this study found that the program was highly cost-effective, with a net excess of quantifiable benefits over costs of more than $1.5 million. Other researchers have found similarly positive effects of Foster Grandparent projects on both elders and children in a variety of other settings, including a day care center, a juvenile correctional facility, and in settings where the Foster Grandparents were working to provide family support for teenage parents.

One of these studies was of a state-funded teenage parenting project in New Jersey employing elders as paraprofessionals in cases of suspected child abuse or neglect. It found that the Foster Grandparents "provided in-home services and often became 'special friends' to members of the family; they provided on-going support, acted as role models to parents of the children" and produced significant improvements in the family environment and interactions, and in the life satisfaction and morale of the elders.

Another study, by Public/Private Ventures (P/PV) of two Foster Grandparent programs and three other initiatives involving elders as mentors to at-risk youth, found the older adults to be effective in forming significant relationships with the young people, a mix of teenage mothers, youth in trouble with the juvenile justice system, and middle school students in danger of dropping out.[72] This study states that a majority of elders were able to form two types of relationships with youth, primary relationships, "characterized by attachments approximating kinship, great intimacy and a willingness on the part of elders to take on the youth's full range of problems and emotions," and secondary relationships, in which "elders served as helpful, 'friendly neighbors,' focusing on positive reinforcement but maintaining more emotional distance." The study also located benefits to the youth including "an improvement in the quality of their day-to-day lives" and in an enhanced sense of competence.[73]

An important finding of the P/PV study concerns the issue of advocacy: "One of the most interesting transformations that takes place in these programs is the development of the elders into powerful advocates as they get to know the young people better, come to understand their circumstances, and begin to believe deeply in them." The study cites instances of advocacy on the part of seniors involving teachers, parents and probation officers, instances designed to assure the youth of equitable treatment.

Continuing Limitations

While there is much encouraging news in the OAVP experience, it would nevertheless be presumptuous to assume that these programs are operating near their full capacity. There are obstacles here as well, and much of their promise, too, remains unfulfilled.

As already pointed out, the OAVP programs are currently oversubscribed and unable to offer slots to all older adults who want them. For example, FGP has a long waiting list and RSVP is available in only a third of the counties nationwide. Overall, these two programs offer volunteer opportunities for less than 2 percent of eligible participants.

At the same time, administration of the OAVP programs has eroded over the past decade. While the number of Foster Grandparent slots increased by 20 percent during the 1980s, administrative funding did not keep up, stretching thin management resources even thinner. Funding limitations on training, technical assistance and oversight from national and regional ACTION offices has hampered local field operations, and the low compensation offered FGP and RSVP directors has affected retention of good staff. Furthermore, during the Reagan administration, ACTION was slated for extinction, and during the Bush administration, despite much Administration interest in the notion of voluntarism, the agency has not been slated for expansion or revitalization.

V. CLOSING THE GAP

Examination of the overall experience of intergenerational elder service contributes to two basic conclusions: this work is not easy but, as the OAVP and select other efforts suggest, it can be done. Existing evidence encourages stepping up efforts aimed at closing the elder service gap.

Fortunately, experience and research to date also provide some clues about how to proceed in closing this gap and moving the field forward. Examination of successful efforts that engage elders to work with youth leads us to conclude that the primary need is for the creation of solid structures to translate good will into effective action.

As former HEW Secretary and U. S. Commissioner of Aging Arthur Flemming says, "Older adults want to help. What they need are sturdy mechanisms that will enable them to do so." In assessing the experience of the Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers project, a voluntarist effort serving elders, Flemming observes: "To attract and keep volunteers, we must invite their participation with a clear-cut statement of need, provide staff support and training, and include them in the organization with the same status and privileges as staff."[74]

Partners in Growth makes a complementary point: "Analysis of the relationships occurring in the five initiatives suggests that the raw material of participant readiness can be shaped fruitfully by intelligent programming...program strategies seem to exert considerable influence on the formation and types of relationships that develop."[75]

Fran Butler, Washington representative of the executive directors of Foster Grandparents and RSVP, echoes Flemming in choosing the word "mechanisms"; according to Butler, "we need to expand or develop mechanisms for channeling the contributions of senior volunteers."[76]

What is most needed to advance practice and help close the elder service gap is institutional strength, a combination of what might be called "structure" and "infrastructure."

CREATING STRUCTURE: LESSONS FROM PRACTICE

Effective elder service and intergenerational programming require program structures that can bring elders and youth together in a responsible fashion. This is all the more true in working with young people from high-risk neighborhoods, a challenging enterprise.

We have much further to go in terms of developing sturdy knowledge in this area, yet progress to date suggests that it is possible to improve the process. Observing these lessons could help close the gap between promise and practice at the program level.

Staffing

One of the chief lessons emerging from a wide variety of projects is that staff are critical. According to one project's final report: "The cost of hiring staff to support and coordinate volunteer activities is minimal compared to the large amount of service work volunteers accomplish. Yet lack of such available staff may be reflected in the fact that a vast pool of volunteer resources remains to be tapped."[77]

This finding is consistent with that of most successful older adult service programs. Partners in Growth found staff to be critical to program success in elder mentoring programs working with youth. The elders often formed close ties to the staff person, which helped sustain their involvement and reduce the pressure of working with young people under great stress. In fact, the departure of a program staff member led frequently to the departure of many of the elder volunteers.[78]

Mission Possible produced a similar lesson; as this demonstration's final report states: "There must be a coordinator assigned to support the mentors and families, keep track of the many needs and issues, and help sort out the inevitable problems." The report adds that one of its sites "lost ground after successfully recruiting and training mentors because no one had responsibility for matching mentors and families. The frustrated volunteer mentors lost interest and eventually dropped out because they had no families to mentor."[79]

Mutual Support

Successful programs are also skilled at helping elders support each other. Convening regular support sessions enables elder volunteers not only to commiserate and ventilate frustrations but to learn from each other. Out of this contact can come a set of attachments beyond those to the youth--attachments to each other. In successful programs, a community of older participants often forms around shared interest in the youth and common experience.

Mission Possible found that "Mentors confront serious family issues, and then they need to be supported and sustained through dialogue, prayer, celebration , and affirmation. They need a sounding board: a way to share their experiences and draw ideas and strength from others."[80]

Training for Elders and Youth

Pre-service and in-service training can help elders develop an understanding of the circumstances of youth and realistic expectations about what working with young people, particularly young people coming from inner-city neighborhoods, will entail. As Nancy Henkin of Temple University points out, "We have found that most older adults appreciate an opportunity to learn new skills and knowledge. If the training is designed to build upon the life experiences of older adults, it usually contributes to the overall success of programs."

Programs have also experienced success orienting youth to the intergenerational concept prior to meeting with elders--working to avoid misconceptions and preparing young people to make the most of the experience.

Tasks and Settings

Another important aspect of program structure is tasks around which the relationships are forged. Simply placing elders and youth in a room and telling them to relate is, in most cases, a recipe for frustration and failure. Savvy programs are able to defuse initial discomfort through focusing attention away from the youth--since receiving help can be stigmatizing--and onto shared concerns. Foster Grandparent programs where the elder and teenage mother are working together to care for the child are examples of this approach. Another illustration comes from programs where elders are working with youth on probation. Many of these elders drive the youth to meet their probation officers. The car ride to and from the visit often turn out to be an excellent context for the two to converse and connect. Joint service projects where elders and youth are working together to help the community might well provide a similar opportunity for connection.

Successful programs are able to create an environment conducive to the formation of relationships. Many elders and youth are looking for the same things, in particular, a safe place to go, an informal environment, that is social in nature. Some programs can become safe harbors for youth and elders. This is particularly important when working in high-risk neighborhoods, where few such harbors exist. It is also important to provide safe transportation for elders and youth to these places.

Time and Consistency

Effective initiatives are also careful to provide sufficient time for elders and youth to be together on a one-to-one basis, and ensure consistency of contact over time. In many Foster Grandparent programs, the elders and youth will spend four hours together a week, every week, usually on the same day. There is

no substitute for logging this kind of time together if the aim is to provide support that is developmental in nature.

Effective Elders

In addition to structural features, P/PV has identified a number of lessons concerning the types of individuals and attitudes that seem to be most conducive to forming constructive bonds.

One important lesson in this area is that the elders who are best able to with effectively with youth are often not the successful "role models" so often selected by mentoring and youth development programs, but rather individuals who themselves have weathered hard lives. These individuals, often from the same class backgrounds as the youth, are more accurately characterized as "survivors" than as "successes." Their experience in the school of hard knocks often enables them to transcend social distance and let them use their own life events as relevant teaching tools.

Another lesson, emerging from research on the Linking Lifetimes demonstration, pertains to patterns of successful and unsuccessful relationships. Those elders who listened closely to youth, who were patient, who provided much reassurance, and who were attuned to the interests and needs of youth were found best able to forge the strongest ties. Those who entered the match with their own preconceived agenda and tried to enforce it upon the youngsters usually got nowhere, particularly those elders who forced youngsters to disclose feelings and information prior to the establishment of trust.[81]

CREATING INFRASTRUCTURE: MORE LESSONS FROM PRACTICE

While good program practices are necessary, they are not sufficient. The graveyard of elder service efforts is littered with solid programs that simply were unable to find a natural "home," couldn't locate continued funding and were stuck working in isolation.

A great many intergenerational and elder service programs find themselves operating without a sustaining infrastructure. As a result, these efforts are powered more often than not by heroic contributions on the part of dedicated entrepreneurs. However, counting on heroism is not realistic social policy; it is simply too rare and idiosyncratic.

The striking exceptions to the infrastructure void are the OAVP programs, which have managed to survive, grow, develop diverse support, and deliver volunteer services for nearly a generation. Their experience speaks clearly to the importance not only of solid program structures, but of institutional backing. It also

contributes to readjusting expectations about how long it takes to build an institution; in this case the process has required more than two decades of gradual construction.

The Quiet Revolution

Emmy E. Werner of the University of California-Davis describes the inception of the Foster Grandparent Program as the beginning of a "quiet revolution." This revolution included casting low-income seniors in productive roles, working with young people in poverty and with special needs. However, even more revolutionary was the role of the federal government. This role is worth reexamining at a time when voluntarism and government action are often thought to be in opposition to each other.[82]

The OAVP programs place government in an **enabling role**, supporting and sustaining voluntary action through the provision of infrastructure--funding, technical assistance, program guidelines, research and other important functions. While much room for improvement remains in the performance of this role and in the execution of these programs, on balance, the role itself is a critical one.[83]

Despite their essential importance, the notions of strengthening infrastructure and building institutions are often ignored in our deliberations and rhetoric about voluntarism. Far more prominent is attention to the virtues of individual altruism, or even to the need to improve programs. In reality, elder service, like most voluntary enterprises, requires all three to work: individual goodwill to start, a program structure to channel that goodwill productively, and an institutional framework to sustain and support the enterprise over time.

As Bellah and his colleagues contend in The Good Society: "One of the greatest challenges, especially for individualistic Americans, is to understand what institutions are--how we form them and how they in turn form us--and to imagine how we can actually alter them for the better."

The great challenge for elder service, over the longer term, will be building these institutional sustaining structures. Without them, programs will continue to come in and out of existence, rarely getting very far along the learning curve, all too often simply fading away.[84]

THOUGHTS FOR THE FUTURE

Beyond stating that such institution-building is essential, and that government can play an important enabling role in this process, the question next becomes what expanded elder service--

whether it be some broader vision of an "Elder Corps" or "Senior Volunteer Corps" or any of the other labels invoked to convey this concept--might look like. This section will not attempt any grand plan, however, it will offer a set of thoughts about this vision and the policies necessary to make it a reality.

Guiding Principles

In contemplating the development of an expanded elder service institution, it is possible to articulate a set of core principles that should guide future deliberations and policy. These include a commitment to:

- Blend government action with community-based decision-making, as practiced by both Foster Grandparents and RSVP;
- Engage a wider range of older adults than is presently occurring through existing programs;
- Develop an expanded menu of volunteer positions, in more diverse settings, than are currently available;
- Make service opportunities available to older adults in every county and community around the country;
- Conduct serious outcome and process research on exemplary program efforts around the country, and disseminate these findings widely;
- Make a priority commitment to intergenerational projects, especially those responding to unmet needs of American youth--particularly young people growing up in poverty.[85]

These principles should inform any future policy action designed to strengthen--to better "enable"--both community-based and government efforts aimed at improving and expanding elder service.

Policy Directions

Simultaneously, policy in this sphere should recognize the importance of strengthening both the non-governmental and governmental sectors.

One aspect of policy might be aimed at **strengthening non-governmental service opportunities emanating from community organizations and community entrepreneurs**, such as initiatives like the

Teen Moms and Work Connections programs and projects seeded by demonstrations like Mission Possible, Linking Lifetimes and Big Brothers/Big Sisters highlighted earlier. These policies might also provide opportunities and incentives for new partnerships between aging and youth organizations, and for other groups like churches and adults service clubs to experiment with intergenerational programming.

Other policy provisions should promote **integration, adaptation, expansion, and fortification of government-initiated elder voluntarism efforts**, most notably the OAVP programs, but also efforts coming out of other government agencies. Provisions in this area might also endeavor to make it easier for intergenerational efforts to become integrated into government service delivery systems, such as those in the area of criminal justice (now being attempted through P/PV's Lab Sites). Efforts might also be made to stimulate the creation of additional government-sponsored elder volunteer programs, adding to the somewhat restricted menu of current choices.

In both cases, the government's enabling role should include financial, technical and management support, and should be executed in a manner designed to complement and support--but never supplant--private efforts.

Locating the Enterprise

In contemplating where expanded elder service activities might eventually be lodged, one place deserving serious attention is the new Commission on National and Community Service, established as a result of the National and Community Service Act of 1990. This legislation, and the Commission, may ultimately be of great significance for elder service, even though its present focus is on youth and the services they can provide.

The Commission is still too new to say very much about it or judge its effectiveness, but it might well come to constitute an important step forward in the execution of government's enabling role in the service arena; in conception, it provides an interesting institutional model for how this role might be carried out; and it has been increasingly encouraging intergenerational service projects. The Commission's Serve-America initiative, for example, allows up to ten percent of funds for programs enabling adults--especially seniors--to volunteer in schools. Furthermore, the new body's broad mandate to stimulate "national and community service" leaves it open to a more active future role.

The Commission's very existence raises the issue of a central "service" agency, one with authority far beyond that now resting with this incipient entity. Such a central agency could help provide a higher profile for service activities and might help coordinate the disparate efforts of various agencies and groups.

Ultimately, the most valuable effect of promoting youth and elder service efforts under one roof might be their increased integration. We should aspire to a service institution that is itself fundamentally age-integrated, one that would not only emphasize creating opportunities for elders and youth to serve, but would also enable them to serve side-by-side.

NEXT STEPS

Building institutions providing well-conceived and widely accessible intergenerational service opportunities needs to be seen as a longer-term goal. Institution-building is usually a slow process, unfolding piece by piece, and not always linear in nature. As already argued, it has taken nearly a generation to establish the "quiet revolution" of the OAVP programs; moving to the next generation of elder service activity may take just as long.

Because such institutions are a longer-term goal does not mean, however, that we must simply await more propitious circumstances to step up our efforts. The present is a particularly good juncture for undertaking activity aimed at expanded intergenerational elder service: the OAVP programs come up for reauthorization in 1993; that same year the White House will hold its Conference on Aging around the theme, "Bonding between the Generations"; and the new National Service Commission will return to Congress with its recommendations in 1993. This confluence of events might well constitute an unusual policy opportunity, particularly in the context of the contemporary interest in voluntarism.

Specifically, action in at least three arenas warrants immediate consideration: research and demonstrations, organization building and policy exploration. Throughout discussing these next steps, as in the preceding sections, emphasis will be placed on working with tools and mechanisms already available, such as the Older American Volunteer Programs, established youth organizations, the National Service Commission, and Generations United. Many of the most important pieces for strengthening intergenerational elder service already exist; a primary need is for strengthening them, adapting them, and linking them together in creative ways.

Research and Demonstrations

There is a pressing need in the area of intergenerational elder service **to test out innovative settings, roles and collaborations.** This research and demonstration work will be essential for grounded progress--for better understanding the promise and limits of elder service, as well as for charting the best routes for navigating this terrain.

Indeed, recent initiatives, like the Linking Lifetimes demonstration, are beginning to illuminate some of these issues. Linking Lifetimes is exploring collaborations with Boys Clubs and incorporates a sophisticated research component. The new Big Brothers/Big Sisters demonstration, while conventional in the sense of working with elementary grade children in the schools, is breaking new ground as a major youth organization acting in partnership with groups like the Tuskegee Airmen, AARP's Volunteer Talent Bank, and the National Retiree Volunteer Center. This project, too, is planning an evaluation--although it remains too early to tell how extensive and probing this research will be.

Alongside these innovative projects, a set of additional demonstrations are in order. Three possibilities are listed below for illustrative purposes, but many others bear consideration:

- Youth service corps are being started in many cities around the country. Many of these corps have expressed interest in engaging older volunteers to work alongside youth, train them in apprenticeship functions, teach parenting skills and perform a variety of other critical functions. These efforts provide an outstanding opportunity for demonstration and collaboration.[86]

- Since 1989, Foster Grandparent and RSVP programs nationally have been trying out new "Programs of National Significance," many of them focusing on at-risk youth and operating on a very small scale. Several of these models could serve as the basis for a demonstration, particularly efforts in which older adults are mentoring adolescents and providing family support to teenage mothers. Another aspect of this exploration could be a study of the effectiveness of the "Programs of National Significance" process as a vehicle for innovation.

- Over the years, many of the prominent youth organizations--not only Big Brothers/Big Sisters, but Girls Incorporated, Boys and Girls Clubs, Camp Fire, and 4H--have experimented with involving older adults. A systematic demonstration involving one or more of these organizations would help test the intergenerational elder service notion in new settings and form a basis for replication if the efforts proved successful. Indeed, research has suggested that the environments

offered by these groups might be well-suited to fostering intergenerational bonds.[87]

In conducting these demonstrations, it is essential to incorporate research that not only looks at attitude changes--the common staple of most research on intergenerational programs to date--but goes further. They should also examine developmental outcomes for elders and youth, the program implementation and relationship formation process, and broader, community-change variables.

Funding these demonstration and research efforts will likely need to come from the foundation community, as well as from United Way agencies. And there is reason for encouragement here. A number of major foundations, including the Carnegie Corporation, Commonwealth Fund, Lilly Endowment, Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, and Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, have expressed interest in this area in recent years and made grants for research and demonstration purposes.

Furthermore, a recent publication by The Foundation Center, "Aging: The Burden Study of Foundation Grantmaking Trends," finds that: "Intergenerational programming is a likely area for continued growth in funding." The report, based on an extensive survey of grantmakers around the country, adds that foundations and corporations are increasingly reluctant to appear to be choosing between the needs of elders and youngsters," and appear increasingly receptive to funding ideas that make it possible to aid both groups simultaneously.[88]

Organization Building

A critical step toward strengthening the infrastructure and advocacy necessary to advance intergenerational efforts at a policy and program level is to **strengthen Generations United**. The creation of this organization was an important step forward for the field; however, its operations have consistently been handicapped by shortages of funding and personnel.

Adequately staffing Generations United, given its program and policy scope and the expectations that have been created for it, means, at a minimum, an Executive Director, a policy specialist, a program specialist, a data base manager and support staff.

A fortified Generations United would be able to provide technical assistance to local and state groups that are interested in setting up chapters of the organization. It would be able to adequately assemble a clearinghouse of intergenerational and elder service activities around the country, and to meet the tide of requests for such information. And such an organization would be better able to develop program activities, including demon-

strations like the one it is currently devising to bring elders and youth together in environmentally related projects.

A strong Generations United would also be in an excellent position to lobby for and help its members become more active in promoting intergenerational elder service--to promote collaborations like the one recently forged between AARP and the Coalition for America's Children. For starters, the organization might sponsor a working conference on the subject involving subgroups of its membership, such as the National Collaboration for Youth's program directors and counterparts at aging network organizations. This conference could focus on advancing the numerous elements of the existing Generations United policy agenda which are designed to strengthen intergenerational cooperation.

Policy Exploration

In addition to mounting appropriate research and demonstration projects, and strengthening the Generations United coalition, there is also a need **to think through options for elder service and the public policies required to institute it.**

Several years ago, such an exploration of the broader idea of national service culminated in Danzig and Szanton's volume, National Service: What Would it Mean? A comparable inquiry is needed in the area of elder service, perhaps setting out and evaluating different scenarios for such an enterprise, focusing not only on the field component, but on administration and legislation as well.

Such a volume might be produced under the direction of an advisory board including the four co-chairs of Generations United, the heads of the FGP and RSVP Executive Directors Associations, and experts in the field of elder service and youth development. It might serve as the springboard for a conference involving the members of Generations United, as well as interested policymakers and government officials. It would be ideal if the product could be completed by 1993, in time for the reauthorization hearings for the OAVP programs, the recommendations by the National Service Commission, and the White House Conference on Aging.

VI. FINAL THOUGHTS

In January 1984, Carnegie Corporation's Aging Society Project held a conference and issued the report, "Children and Elders: Intergenerational Relations in an Aging Society." The report concluded by recommending "increasing intergenerational contact through social programs," admitting that "there is little hard evidence" proving the worth of these efforts, counseling research "to discover what tangible benefits intergenerational contact will produce," but urging us to move forward nevertheless.[89]

The report made this leap of faith to encourage action and research because it found that intergenerational programming addresses important needs in three related areas--demographic, developmental and political:

- It "appears good for those older people who are lonely, have lost some of their interest in life, and suffer a diminished sense of self worth";
- "There are so many children who are turned off, angry, disadvantaged or are failing in school and who need the kind of one-to-one attention older people can provide"; and
- "Aside from the specific values to participants, an age-integrated society can help alleviate intergenerational tensions that may become more critical as our population ages."

The report goes on to propose sweeping changes, including not only major reforms to increase age integration in existing educational and social service institutions, but the creation of new "institutions that might bring young and old people together."

The subject of this paper has been the building of one such "institution"--elder service--on opportunities for older adults to contribute productively to society through serving, and through serving with, young people. The perspective offered is that a "quiet revolution" was launched with the creation of the Older American Volunteer Programs a generation ago, a revolution that remains incomplete today, but one that is worth building on.

Why should we go forward? In part, as the earlier Carnegie report states, because there is reason to believe that, done well, these efforts can potentially make our society more efficient, help many individual elders and youth, and forestall political conflict along generational lines.

But something even more fundamental is at stake. As James Fallows has observed, "People don't live in markets, they live in societ-

ies."[90] The survival of societies, and of the social fabric that binds them together, is ultimately dependent upon people--of different classes, from different ethnic groups, in different generations--recognizing their interdependence. Elder service efforts connecting older adults and youth contain the potential to bring individuals together in a way that helps them recognize and appreciate these essential ties.

As such, these efforts can help to preserve, perhaps resuscitate, what the 19th century Scottish philosopher Adam Ferguson called "the gift of society."[91] Performed at scale, built on sturdy institutional foundations, elder service might actually help move us toward a society that is not only more pleasant to live in, but capable of reproducing itself over time.[92] For it is only through growing up in such richly textured contexts that young people can come to appreciate "the gift of society," and understand their duty to pass it on.

ENDNOTES

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2. See Eric Kingson et al., Ties That Bind: The Interdependence of Generations (Washington, DC: Seven Locks Press, 1986), particularly pp. 4-5, 130-131. Also see Barbara Wolfe, "Treating Children Fairly," Daniel Callahan, "Health Care Struggle between Young and Old," and Victor R. Fuchs, "Are Americans Underinvesting in Their Children?," Society, special issue on "Generations in Conflict, September/October, 1991.

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4. Quoted in Elliot Carlson, "The Phony War: Exploding the myth of the generational conflict between young and old," Modern Maturity, January 22, 1991.

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7. The Daniel Yankelovich Group, Inc., "Intergenerational Tension in 1987: Real or Imagined?," April 1987, pp. 4-7.

8. Maggie Kuhn quoted in National Center for Service Learning in Early Adolescence, The Partners Program: A Guide for Community Agencies, (New York: CASE, City University of New York, 1991), pp. 1-2. Based on article in Gray Panther Network, Winter 1985.

9. Marion Wright Edelman, Remarks before AARP's National Legislative Council, January, 1991.

10. For the notion of an "Elder Corps," see Ken Dychtwald's Age Wave. States Dychtwald, "I strongly believe that we should create an organized national Elder Corps. Like the Peace Corps, this organization could be a channel for the great untapped reservoir of time, energy, love, and experience represented by America's older citizens." Ken Dychtwald with Joe Flower, Age Wave: How the Most

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13. Cited in Melanie Styles, Linking Lifetimes Relationships Study (Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures, forthcoming).

14. John P. Robinson, "Quitting Time," American Demographics, May 1991, p. 34.

15. Ann Smith quoted in Frances F. Butler, "Harnessing a Natural Resource--Volunteers," Aging Today, June/July 1991, p. 7.

16. cited in Styles.

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18. A. Alfred Taubman, "An Untapped Pool of Teachers," The New York Times, March 12, 1989, p. 25.

19. Karen Pittman, "A New Vision: Promoting Youth Development," Testimony before The House Committee on Children, Youth and Families, September 30, 1991; also see, Karen Pittman with Marlene Wright, "A Rationale for Enhancing the Role of the Non-School Voluntary Sector in Youth Development," a paper prepared for the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, February 1991.

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38. "Schools Appeal to the Elderly for Support," The New York Times.

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40. Quote from David Liederman in "At-Risk Families: Intergenerational Programs Can Help," Generations Together Exchange, Winter 1991. Comment by John Gato in New Age Journal, September/October 1990.

41. Goleman, "Erikson, In His Own Old Age, Expands His View of Life." The New York Times, June 14, 1988.

42. Robert N. Bellah, "Visions, Values, and Strategies for Challenging Times," Speech to the Support Center/CTD, San Francisco, July 2, 1991.

43. Cited in National Research Council, Volunteers in the Public Schools (Washington: National Academy Press, 1990), p. 29.

44. Study by the National School Volunteer Program during a 12-month period in 1981-1982, cited in Volunteers in Public Schools, p. 21.

45. Volunteers in Public Schools, p. 62; also from Kaplan, "Suppose They Gave an Intergenerational Conflict."

46. Cited in Volunteers in Public Schools.

47. Generations Together Exchange, Winter 1991.

48. "Passing the Torch: Older Americans Help to Shape the Future as Volunteers in Schools." School Volunteering, December 1988, p. 1.

49. See Marc Freedman, Partners in Growth: Elder Mentors and At-Risk Youth (Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures, 1988).

50. Freedman, Partners in Growth.

51. Andrew Malcolm, "Helping Grandparents Who Are Parents Again," The New York Times, November 19, 1991; Douglas Martin, "Once a Week, A Respite from Havoc," The New York Times, August 17, 1991.

52. Information on Foster Grandparents and RSVP comes from materials provided by ACTION, by the Executive Directors' Associations of the two groups, from Congressional Testimony, and from a series of articles including: Rosalyn Saltz, "Help Each Other: The U.S. Foster Grandparent Program," The Elder Press Occasional Paper Series, 1985; Rosalyn Saltz, "Research Evaluation of a Foster Grandparent Program," in Sally Newman and Steven Brummel, Eds., Intergenerational Programs: Imperatives, Strategies, Impacts, Trends (New York: The Haworth Press, 1989), pp. 205-216.

53. The ACTION estimate of average hours worked per week is 5.4, however a survey conducted by the National Association of RSVP Directors in 1988 found RSVP volunteers working approximately 16

hours per week, at a cost to the federal government of 47 cents per hour.

54. Because You Have So Much to Share: A Guide to Using Older Volunteers, (Philadelphia: Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America, 1990), p. iii.

55. Proposal to The Mott Foundation by Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America, 1991.

56. Quotes and information come from Mission Possible: Churches Supporting Fragile Families (Washington, DC: National Crime Prevention Council, 1990).

57. Information on Linking Lifetimes supplied by the program, including the newsletter, Linkletter, and research summaries from Lodestar Management Research and Public/Private Ventures, as well as Ann Richards, "Linking Lifetimes," Mott Exchange, Spring 1991.

58. Information derived from four documents published by AARP's "Older Volunteers in Partnership with Parents" project: "Executive Summary: Evaluation of Parent Aide Demonstration Project," A Directory of Parent Aide Programs, A Resource Guide for Incorporating Older Volunteers into Parent Aide Programs, Results of a Nationwide Survey of Parent Aide Programs (Washington, DC: Social Outreach Department, AARP, 1987).

59. One of the best discussions of this kind can be found in Joan Schine, "Young Adolescents and Community Service," Working Paper of the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development (Washington, DC: Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, June 1989).

60. Between Friends: Creating Intergenerational Work/Study Programs for Youth At Risk And Older Adults: A Guide For Concerned Communities (New York: Fund for Aging Services, 1990).

61. See Alvia Y. Branch and Marc Freedman, The New York City Volunteer Corps: Interim Report (Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures, 1986), and Natalie Jaffe and Marc Freedman, The New York City Volunteer Corps: Exit Report (Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures, 1987).

62. See Joan Schine, "Young Adolescents and Community Service."

63. Project described in "Youth Exchanging with Seniors," Interchange, Winter 1992.

64. Kaplan, "Suppose They Gave an Intergenerational Conflict...."

65. "Intergenerational Programs in New York City," An Occasional Paper of the New York Center for Policy on Aging, The New York Community Trust, December 1988.

66. Harold Sheppard, "Damaging Stereotypes About Aging Are Taking Hold: How to Counter Them," Perspectives on Aging, January/February 1990, p. 4.

67. J. Peder Zane, "As Social Need Rises, So Does Volunteerism," The New York Times, January 6, 1992.

68. Various strategies for coping with these fears are discussed in Barbara Mathias, "Fear of Volunteering," The Washington Post, February 4, 1992. p. D5.

69. See Marc Freedman, The Kindness of Strangers: Reflections on the Mentoring Movement (Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures, 1991).

70. Retention data from Foster Grandparents and RSVP.

71. See R. Saltz, "Help Each Other: The U.S. Foster Grandparent Program"; R. Saltz, "Research Evaluation of a Foster Grandparent Program"; and R. Saltz, "Aging Persons as Child-Care Workers in a Foster-Grandparent Program: Psychosocial Effects and Work Performance," Aging and Human Development, Volume 2, 1971.

72. Partners in Growth found that in 47 matches across five programs, 37 constituted significant relationships. A forthcoming study of the Linking Lifetimes demonstration, also conducted by Public/Private Ventures, similarly shows a high percentage of relationship formation and satisfaction on the part of both elders and youth, although the Linking Lifetimes research reveals this level of bonding to be in approximately two out of three cases.

73. Evidence suggesting the importance of elder-youth contact in the context of programs can be found in the intergenerational youth service literature as well. As one study of the City Volunteer Corps states, "Intergenerational projects that involve corpsmembers with older adults...appear to be the best vehicle for (human) service," continuing that it "appears particularly effective for developing the service ethic among corpsmembers themselves."

74. Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers: A Special Report (Princeton: The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 1989), p. 18.

75. Freedman, Partners In Growth.

76. Frances F. Butler, "Harnessing a Natural Resource--Volunteers," Aging Today, June/July 1991.

77. Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers, p. 18.

78. Freedman, Partners in Growth.

79. Mission Possible: Churches Supporting Fragile Families, p. 11.

80. Mission Possible: Churches Supporting Fragile Families, p. 16.

81. Styles, Linking Lifetimes Relationships Study.

82. Emmy E. Werner, "Civil Society and Human Development," Speech to Law and Society Seminar, Harvard Law School, October 10, 1990.

83. See Harry R. Moody, Abundance of Life: Human Development Policies for an Aging Society (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), particularly pp. 9-10.

84. Robert N. Bellah et. al., The Good Society (New York: Knopf, 1991), p. 5.

85. These principles are adapted from a memo to the Villers Foundation by Fran Rothstein looking at the lessons and implications of the RSVP program for an expanded "Senior Volunteer Corps."

86. The San Francisco Conservation Corps prepared a concept paper outlining just such a program in December of 1988, but was unable to secure funding for its implementation (See, "The Silver Streaks: A New Intergenerational Initiative of the San Francisco Conservation Corps," December 1988).

87. See Styles, Linking Lifetimes Relationships Study. It is worth noting that the Temple University Center for Intergenerational Learning is currently developing a project that will involve work with the National Urban League, YMCA's, Boys and Girls Clubs, and COSMOS to engage older adults directly in the youth serving activities of these organizations.

88. Barbara Greenberg et. al., Aging: The Burden Study of Foundation Grantmaking Trends (New York: The Foundation Center, 1991), pp. 96-97.

89. Ira Mothner, Children and Elders: Intergenerational Relations in an Aging Society (New York: Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1984).

90. James Fallows, "Wake Up, America!," The New York Review of Books, March 1, 1990. p. 19.

91. Adam Ferguson, An Essay on the History of Civil Society (Philadelphia: Wm. Fry, 1819), p. 32.

92. A testimony to the powerful link between institutional and cultural change can be found in the aging area. Historians agree, for example, that there was no true concept of retirement in the U.S. prior to the advent of Social Security. As Alvin Schorr of the Mandell School at Case Western summarizes, "Social Security created the idea of retirement." See Schorr, Common Decency:

Domestic Policies after Reagan (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986). Also see William Graebner, A History of Retirement: The Meaning and Function of An American Institution, 1885-1978 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980).

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: SURVEY OF AGING ORGANIZATIONS

APPENDIX B: INFORMATION ON OLDER AMERICAN VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

APPENDIX C: GENERATIONS UNITED MEMBERSHIP LIST

The Contributions of Older Adults and the Aging Network to Youth Development: Survey of National Aging Organizations

1. This survey was completed by:

   Name: _____

   Title: _____

   Organization: _____

   Phone: _____

   Date: _____

2. In what ways is your organization currently involved in, or now contemplating, activities or efforts to aid at-risk early adolescents through:

   Programs: _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   Research: _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   Policy: _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

3. Generally, what has been your experience to date in these activities? _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

4. Does your organization collaborate with any of the following national organizations on youth-related program, research or policy efforts. (Please check all that apply). If so, briefly describe on a separate sheet your involvement and its impact or intended impact on the positive development of at-risk youth.

Organization	Programs	Research	Policy
American Camping Assoc.	_____	_____	_____
American Red Cross	_____	_____	_____
Aspira	_____	_____	_____
Big Brothers/Big Sisters	_____	_____	_____
Boy Scouts	_____	_____	_____
Boys and Girls Club	_____	_____	_____
Camp Fire	_____	_____	_____
Child Welfare League of America	_____	_____	_____
COSSMHO Youth Agencies & Demos	_____	_____	_____
4-H	_____	_____	_____
Girl Scouts	_____	_____	_____
Girls Inc.	_____	_____	_____
Junior Achievement	_____	_____	_____
NAACP Youth Division	_____	_____	_____
Nat'l Network of Runaway and Youth Services	_____	_____	_____
Nat'l Urban League	_____	_____	_____
Salvation Army	_____	_____	_____
Work, Achievement, Value and Education, Inc.	_____	_____	_____
YMCA	_____	_____	_____
YWCA	_____	_____	_____
Other Organization(s):			
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Date	Title	Firm or Agency -- Name
December 27, 1988	Older Americans Program Non-Stipended Evaluation	ACTION
July 1, 1985	Volunteers As Care Givers: ACTION'S National Long Term Care Demonstration Research Project	ACTION
September 24, 1984	Impact Evaluation of the Foster Grandparent Program on the Foster Grandparents	Litigation Support Services
September 1, 1984	Descriptive Evaluation of RSVP and FGP Volunteers Working with Head Start:	ACTION
June 1, 1984	The Effects of Foster Grandparents on Juvenile Offenders in Georgia Youth Development Centers	ACTION
	Volunteers As Care Givers ACTION'S National Long Term Care Demonstration Research Project	ACTION
July 21, 1983	Impact Evaluation of the Foster Grandparent Program on Foster Grandparents -- Phase II	Litigation Support Services
October 31, 1982	Evaluation of the Effects of the Foster Grandparent Program -- Impact Study	Litigation Support Services
December 31, 1981	The Foster Grandparent Program: Its Impact on Children in Special Education and Juvenite Offenders	Lawrence Johnson & Associates, Inc.
September 1, 1981	Foster Grandparent Program An Evaluation of Selected Demonstration Components	ACTION
	Foster Grandparent Program Impact Evaluation Effects on the Foster Grandparents Summary Report Year One	ACTION
	Long Term Care and Voluntarism	ACTION
August 21, 1981	Design for Measuring the Impact of FGP on Children	Lawrence Johnson & Associates, Inc.

Date	Title	Firm or Agency -- Name
	Served	
August 1, 1981	Foster Grandparent Program National Conference Evaluation Report	ACTION
March 1, 1981	Older American Volunteer Program Self-Help Evaluation Handbook	ACTION
January 1, 1981	ACTION Older American Volunteer Programs Transportation Evaluation	
	ACTION Older Americans Volunteer Programs Transportation Evaluation	
September 1, 1980	Foster Grandparent Program Demonstration Projects Analysis Phase I Volume II	ACTION
		ACTION
October 1, 1977	The Development and Packaging of Impact Evaluation Models of ACTION'S Older American Volunteer Programs Phases II and III	The National Council on the Aging, Inc.
March 31, 1976	Foster Grandparent Program Program Evaluation	ACTION
	Foster Grandparent Program Project Evaluations Report	ACTION
January 1, 1974	Foster Grandparent Project Evaluations	ACTION
August 1, 1973	Curriculum for O.A.V.P. Participant's Workshop	Case Western Reserve University
June 1, 1972	Cost-Benefit Study of the Foster Grandparent Program	Booz, Allen Public Administration Services, Inc.
September 1, 1968	Foster-Grandparents and Institutionalized Young Children	Merrill-Palmer Institute
May 1, 1967	Evaluation of a Foster-Grandparent Program	Merrill-Palmer Institute
March 1, 1967	Foster Grandparents and Retarded Children	Utah Council on Aging

Date	Title	Firm or Agency -- Name
October 1, 1966	An Evaluation of the Foster Grandparent Program	Greenleigh Associates, Inc.
	A Model for Assessment of the Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion Programs	BRX Inc./IFR Joint Venture

MEMBERS

Co-chairs
American Association of Retired Persons
Child Welfare League of America
Children's Defense Fund
The National Council on the Aging

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association of Children's Residential Centers
American Association of Homes for the Aging
American Diabetes Association
American Federation of Teachers
American Foundation for the Blind
American Home Economics Association
American Occupational Therapy Association, Inc.
American Orthopsychiatric Association, Inc.
American Public Welfare Association
American Red Cross
American Society on Aging
Asociación Nacional ProPersonas Mayores
Association for the Care of Children's Health
Association of Junior Leagues International
Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America
Boy Scouts of America
B'nai B'rith International
B'nai B'rith Women
Camp Fire, Inc.
Catholic Charities USA
Center for Law and Social Policy
Center for Population Options
Center for Understanding Aging, Inc.
Center on Rural Elderly
Child Care Action Campaign
Children's Foundation
Christian Children's Fund, Inc.
Congressional Award Foundation
Council of Jewish Federations
Epilepsy Foundation of America
Family Resource Coalition
Family Service America
Foundation for Exceptional Children
Future Homemakers of America, Inc.
Generations Together
Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.
Girls, Inc.
Gray Panthers
Home and School Institute, Inc.
Institute for Educational Leadership
International Council on Social Welfare
Joint Action in Community Service, Inc.
Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation
Lifespan Resource, Inc.
Little Brothers, Friends of the Elderly
Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs
Magic Me
National Adoption Center
National Assembly of National Voluntary Health and Social Welfare Organizations
National Association for the Education of Young Children
National Association for Home Care
National Association of Area Agencies on Aging
National Association of Children's Hospitals and Related Institutions
National Association of Community Action Agencies
National Association of Counties
National Association of Foster Grandparents Program Directors
National Association of Homes for Children
National Association of Meal Programs
National Association of Partners in Education
National Association of RSVP Directors, Inc.
National Association of Senior Companion Program Directors
National Association of Service and Conservation Corps
National Association of Social Workers
National Association of State Boards of Education
National Association of State Units on Aging
National Benevolent Association of the Christian Church
National Black Child Development Institute, Inc.
National Caucus and Center on Black Aged
National Center on Aging and Community Education
National Citizens' Coalition for Nursing Home Reform
National Coalition of State Juvenile Justice Advisory Groups
National Commission to Prevent Infant Mortality
National Committee for Adoption
National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse
National Community Action Foundation
National Community Education Association
National Council of Catholic Women
National Council of Jewish Women
National Council of Senior Citizens
National Council on Child Abuse and Family Violence
National Council on Family Relations
National Crime Prevention Council
National Education Association
National Farmers Union
National Indian Council on Aging, Inc.
National Mental Health Association
National Network of Runaway and Youth Services
National PTA
National Perinatal Association
National Puerto Rican Forum
National Recreation and Parks Association
National Rural and Small Schools Consortium
National Urban League, Inc.
National Women's Political Caucus
Older Women's League
OMB Watch
Opportunities for Older Americans
Orphan Foundation of America
Parent Action
PEER/NOW LDEF-Project on Equal Education Rights
Positive Youth Development Initiative
Public/Private Ventures, Inc.
Salvation Army
Save the Children
Temple University Institute on Aging
Travelers Aid Association of America
Travelers Aid International
United Church Board for Homeland Ministries
United Way of America
Vesper Society
Waif, Inc.
Wave, Inc.
Young Men's Christian Association of the U.S.A.
Young Women's Christian Association of the U.S.A.
Youth Service America

State and local intergenerational coalitions affiliated with Generations United

Generations United of Illinois
Kansas Intergenerational Network
Interages (Maryland-Montgomery County)
Massachusetts Intergenerational Network
Generations United of Michigan
New Mexico Intergenerational Network
New York State Intergenerational Network
Oregon Generations Together
Delaware Valley Intergenerational Network (Pennsylvania)
Let's Link Ages in Virginia
Seattle-King County (Washington) Generations United
Wisconsin Intergenerational Network